# SCPD EMPLOYMENT FIRST OVERSIGHT COMMISSION APRIL 9, 2019 SMYRNA STATE SERVICE CENTER, SMYRNA

<u>Present:</u> Cindy Sterling, Chair, ServiceSource/AND; Sandy Reyes, Co-Chair, Department of Human Resources; Marissa Catalon, DDDS; Elisabeth Furber, CLASI/DLP; Jennifer Garcias, DDDS; Thomas Hall, DHSS/DSS; Emmanuel Jenkins, DDC (via phone); Dale Matusevich, DOE; Julie Petroff, DOL-Division of Industrial Affairs (DIA); Lloyd Schmitz, Council on Blind/SCPD; Jackeline Saez-Rosario, Advocate; Ron Sarg, DCVA/MOAA; Kyle Hodges, Staff; and Amber Rivard, Support Staff.

**Guests:** Deb Bradl, DVI/DHSS; Laura Strmel, SJCS; and Genelle Taylor, DSAMH.

Absent: Andrea Guest, DVR; and Rick Kosmalski, DDC.

#### CALL TO ORDER/Introductions/Approval of February 12, 2019 Minutes

Cindy called the meeting to order at 9:33 am. Everyone introduced themselves. The February 12, 2019 minutes were reviewed. Corrections were given for page 4 and page 5. Page 4 second paragraph from the bottom, ServiceSource moved location, instead of Wilmington, put New Castle, Corporate Commons and are not partnered with DDDS, but collaborating with them as a team along with other non-profit partners. Page 5, second paragraph from the bottom, discussion of Classic or Edge extensions. Instead of "Classic", it is a base of letters "CLSC (Career Life Study Certificate)." Ron motioned for approval of the February minutes as amended. Julie seconded the motion. The February 12<sup>th</sup> minutes were approved as amended.

### ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

#### Additions:

Kyle added discussion of membership to the agenda.

### **BUSINESS**

#### Review of Baseline Data

Kyle stated that he is waiting for baseline data from DOE, Kids Department, DSAMH and DSAAPD. He will resend the request if he does not hear from them soon. The information that was collected, was received a day prior to the April meeting. The Divisions that attended (DDDS, DSS, and DVI) reviewed the information that was provided.

Thomas stated that Ray Fitzgerald (Director of Division of Social Services) DSS replied to an email regarding baseline data and how they engage individuals with disabilities. The data in the email described the following initiatives that DSS administered:

- 1. **Transitional Work Program** This program started in September 2009 with the TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Program, welfare reform, and engagement plan in employment training activities. Inside of this program, there was an option for people that identify themselves or provided medical certification to engage in the program, but was not required to participate. DSS created the transitional work program to assist in people with disabilities to end their dependency on TANF and become involved in the community with training for the place of employment. In 2018, this program saw 256 total referrals, 202 intakes completed, 59 employment outcomes, 24 were awarded social security benefits, 45 SSDI/SSI application were filed by Case Manager, and 76 developed a wellness plan.
- 2. WONDER (Work Opportunity Networks to Develop Employment Readiness) Employment and Training Program WONDER Works is a Food Stamp (SNAP) employment and training program. It is not focused on people with a disability but is offered to all SNAP clients regardless of their disability status. This program has provided support and services to a number of individuals with disabilities who voluntarily enrolled in the program, despite the exemption from required participation. The data is as follows: 414 people were identified as persons with disabilities and volunteered to participate in WONDER during SFY18. Fifty-eight (58) participants successfully completed a track assignment from the program, and 113 obtained employment one or more times while being in the WONDER Works Program. DSS wants to expand this program into other agencies such as DDDS.
- 3. **CAI** (Computer Aid Incorporated), a technology vendor Document Imaging **Project** It is a program/project consisting of 10 positions of CAI for performing document-imaging services. All of the positions are for individuals on the Autism Spectrum and has been around since 2013. Since the beginning of this program, 50 individuals have been hired. Cindy asked how people would learn about this program. Tom clarified that CAI directs the program.

Kyle stated that there was another document/handout that Ray Fitzgerald responsed to dealing with employment services for people with disabilities. Tom commented that the only numbered data is answered in #4 - part b) "In your last fiscal year, how many individuals were served in the categories below?" He answered 182 for competitive employment and 267 for Career Track Plans. Kyle asked how the numbers matched up to the other numbers. Tom clarified from Transitional Work program, Ray provided that information within the email (SNAP population – 182 Competitive Employment and WONDER Works program either of the four tracks- 267). Kyle asked if this changes, let him know in how to connect all of the baseline data.

Deb replied to the DVI baseline data information letter that was sent to her agency. Regarding the first question, "Does your agency have a strategic plan that identifies measurable goals and objectives relative to promoting and achieving employment?" DVI response: "Yes, under the WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act), DVI is one of the core partners in Delaware's Combined State Plan outlining measurable goals and objectives related to

Delaware's Workforce System and promoting and achieving employment for people with disabilities." DVI's goals include increasing the quality and quantity of employment outcomes by 15% from the previous fiscal year, review evaluate and implement improvements to Transition Services, improving marketing and outreach to eligible DVI consumers, improving assistive technology services through innovation and expansion, and providing a high level of customer satisfaction. DVI has been marking measures such as DVI consumers being employed within each program year, continuing to use the Visually Impaired Client Registry and September 30<sup>th</sup> Student Count in validating identity and school enrollment status, having other entities provide service and exposure to people with visual impairment and blind communities, increasing the pool of service providers by three each program year, and sharing DVI customer service satisfaction surveys with State Rehabilitation Council. DVI is updating their social media presence to get the word out to the communities about programs held within DVI services.

DVI's Orientation and Mobility Unit was involved with the Wilmington Police Department in workshops last year to educate them on what it is like for someone with a visual impairment on the streets and if they had a hood up, it could mean that they are just sensitive to the light and for them to not assume that they are up to no good. DVI is doing more to educate other State agencies about working with people that are visually impaired or blind to make sure they understand how to make a worksite accessible (bigger print, etc.), and understanding the purpose of orientation and mobility. DVI answered the other questions in the letter as listed:

- Is your agency offering Employment First (EF)? If so, is EF being offered as a first option? If so, how many individual plans are is EF offered as a first option? Yes, DVI offers it. EF is offered as a first option to all individuals. During Federal FY 18, DVI developed 46 plans where EF is selected as a first option.
- What data does your agency compile on people with disabilities in your system that receives vocational support? DVI collects its data through the case management system. DVI submits an Annual Report to its partners and provides data used for the Combined State Plan measures. The new caseload amount for FY 18 is 241 individuals, number of eligible = 49, number of new/completed plans for VR services = 46, individuals in higher education/training program = 68, number of transitional students (14-21) = 88, closed with successful outcomes = 38, average wage (hourly) = \$18.43 and hours worked at closure = 34 hours/week.
- Vocational Support and/or services are provided by your agency? 38 services for Competitive Employment and there are 68 Career Track Plans/ Continuing Higher Education.
- What are the barriers your agency experiences in competitive employment? DVI's barriers are lack of accessibility in computer applications and systems, perceptions of people with visual impairments in what they can do, and flexibility of accommodations. Lloyd discussed about how Delaware closed the Industries for the Blind in order to not support sheltered workshop, but they moved the majority of individuals from there to another facility while counting them as competitive closure. Dale added that those individuals have an opportunity for advancement because it is an integrated setting and making minimum wage. Kyle asked about DVI's barrier of transportation and if any individual has lost their job due to that barrier. Clarification was made that when individuals finish their employment hours for the day, and there is a delay with transportation arriving on time, the individual has to wait in the parking lot.

• Innovated ideas, best practices, or best partnerships your agency may have for providing competitive employment opportunities for people with disabilities? – DVI has been allocating State positions for work-based learning with the option to move into Selective Placement process, offering all State hiring managers to complete diversity and Selective Placement training, and being flexible with transportation and hours of transportation. Lloyd added that the agencies need to lead by example in training hiring managers for Selective Placement. Kyle agreed that it should be a requirement. Cindy suggested that the Selective Placement training could be renamed differently.

Lloyd stated that SCPD had started to discuss Selective Placement when Nick Fina was Chair. Nick had challenged the members of SCPD (broken up into smaller groups) to select a topic and pursue it. Moni Edgar, Deb Bradl, Anthony Carter and Lloyd chose to work on Selective Placement and scheduled a meeting with Keith Hunt and Jane Hahn. A call was made back in December 2018 or January 2019 that they were in the process of re-doing their Selective Placement program and to call back Keith at the end of February to schedule a meeting. Lloyd added that he recently received an email from Keith Hunt suggesting the 17<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> of April. Kyle suggested inviting Keith Hunt and Jane Hahn to a Commission meeting to further discuss this topic.

DDDS has no formal strategic plan that identifies specific measurable goals on employment first. DDDS had taken steps to ensure people served by their Division as the first option in employment within the community. One of their efforts is in the Pathways To Employment program (PTE). It is a Medicaid State Plan Option for youths (14-25) with a disability to be prepared for work, finding employment and achieving success in their employment setting. A list of services are provided within the PTE for youths to achieve and keep their employment. A few of the services provided are small group supported employment, financial coaching, orientation and mobility, and employment navigation (case management). PTE is a home and communitybased program and in partnership with the Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA). The program helps youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, but the people with physical disabilities and visual impairments have additional options/services available to them with the assistance from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). DDDS has alternated their Day Service Referral Procedure. All of the new referrals for Pre-Vocational Services will include a referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in assuring that people are assessed for employment first versus the assumptions of them requiring pre-vocational activities to seek employment.

DDDS collaborated with DVR, schools, and the PTE program. The Employment Navigators worked with the schools and DVR to support individuals in achieving employment and guide the individuals through the process (PTE). From the previous FY18, 401 individuals were enrolled in PTE with employment plans along with 375 enrolled within Supported Employment services. DDDS had to expand staffing in order to support the large number of individuals enrolled in employment services and PTE. Recently, DDDS went through a reclassification process of employing three additional senior social work case managers to act as an employment navigator in order to maintain the caseloads. A new supervisor was added to New Castle County. Traditional Support Employment Services gained more individuals through their home and community-based waiver program. There is still a large number of individuals being served in

day habilitation services. They emphasis multiple times to individuals that DDDS has employment services available if they are interested. DDDS also contracts with University of Delaware to assist with completing the National Core Indicator Survey on an annual basis that involves interest around employment services for each state. DDDS provided data in the number of individuals served since FY18: 568 receiving pre vocational services, 682 receiving support employment services, and 401 receiving one or more PTE services. Cindy added to show the significant impact on the services, DDDS could look back five years ago. The number of individuals within other services of DDDS include Sheltered Workshops – 327, Competitive Employment – 595, Career Track Plans/ Continuing or Higher Education (UD CLSC Program) – 15, and Career Exploration and Assessment (PTE) – 17.

DDDS has barriers that need to be improved such as limited assessment locations for individuals that are able to experience employment options that are meaningful to them, lack of job carving opportunities, limited provider network or limited provider capacity for non-facility-based prevocational services and supported employment services, and high turn-over in direct support professionals/employment specialists. DDDS identified innovative ideas or partnerships in achieving employment opportunities for people with disabilities. DDDS partnered with DOE, DVR and local agencies in an Early Start to Supported Employment initiative (ESSE). There is a new service under the Lifespan waiver amendment called Community Participation. It gives participants a chance to explore and engage in their community while pursuing personal interests (i.e.; internships or volunteering). DDDS also joined the national Community of Practice (COP) in supporting families of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in 2015. This teaches them how to integrate the tools found in the Life Course Toolkit into everyday life. Cindy suggested spreading the word and letting citizens of Delaware know that COP is still operating through the Disability Hub or Facebook.

Kyle stated that the other baseline data information (DVR, DOC, and DOE) that the Commission received could be held off until next meeting. Kyle noted that the response from DOC was in the context of its employees, not who it serves (i.e. prisoners, including those with disabilities). Kyle asked if there should be more information included on these baseline data information. Julie suggested resending the letter back to DOC for additional information. Kyle added that he will resend the letters to the agencies that he did not hear from including resending it to DOC. A member suggested that Kyle resend it to Perry Phelps (DOC).

#### Additional Agenda Item: Discussion of Membership

Kyle suggested that the Commission amend the employment First membership to include DVI as a formal member, and have other agencies that are interested being involved in the Commission. He asked if anyone had any suggestions with how to revamp the membership. A member mentioned a question that surfaced at the hearing with Deb Heffernan in reaching a quorum. Kyle added that Lloyd was appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, and we need to find a replacement and address the term limit issue. Cindy stated that the Commission will discuss this at the next meeting.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Delaware Veterans Watch School hosted their first graduation ceremony on April 12, 2019. The Delaware Veterans Watch School consists of retired watchmakers volunteering their time to provide training, support and referral services to honorably discharged veterans to learn the craft of watchmaking. For more information on this organization, the Commission can visit: <a href="http://veteranswatchmakersinitiative.org">http://veteranswatchmakersinitiative.org</a>. Laura asked if they have a job placement piece within the program. Ron replied with a yes.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Rivard Administrative Specialist